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19 May 1964

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Science and Technology

SUBJECT: Present Status of U-2L Proposal in Pentagon Circles

1. Thought you might be interested in the latest intelligence on the status of the U-2L proposal to which Col. Geary has recently turned his considerable energies. Briefly it is as follows:

a. Shortly after mid-April, during a visit to Washington by Kelly Johnson, Kelly and Leo bearded Secretary Zuckert on the subject of the U-2L in a 90-minute conversation. Although reportedly lukewarm to the idea in the beginning, [REDACTED] is said to have melted under the combined eloquence of Johnson & Geary, and at the end of the seance was allegedly reaching for his pen to sign the request for approval which Geary had not prepared - purposely, he said.

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b. No further concrete action seems to have been taken until 13 May when Geary returned from leave. However, just prior to that moment, in a manner not clear to me as yet, [REDACTED] heard about the U-2L possibly via a conversation with the DNRO. It was reported to me Monday, 11 May, that [REDACTED] has shot down the proposal", but at the same time he was said to have indicated his awareness of the need for a high altitude reconnaissance vehicle other than the OXCART/KEDLOCK to do the kind of job the U-2 has been doing so well.

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c. On 14 May Geary visited me and revealed that he had had an audience with [REDACTED] at its conclusion [REDACTED] had agreed to support the U-2L on the proposed basis of 25 aircraft procurement, and an estimate of cost of aircraft and engines of approximately [REDACTED]. His principal questioning of Geary seems to have been why the RB57-F couldn't do the job. Geary answered this successfully. However, [REDACTED] said that because the USAF budget is tight in 1965, the earliest that he could see the money was FY 1966. Leo and I both feel this would be too late.

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d. In addition to seeing [REDACTED] has sought the support of [REDACTED] as a means of getting to General Le May and getting his favorable consideration on the matter. There has been no report on this as yet beyond the fact that [REDACTED] has been swung over and supports the idea, as reportedly does [REDACTED] estimates (and this conforms with our figure) that 25 airframes would [REDACTED] He has obtained a preliminary quotation from P&W on an order of 35 engines (J75-P-13) [REDACTED] or roughly [REDACTED] for the entire order. I have no figures on sub-systems or camera systems but I think Geary is soliciting quotations here as well.

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e. The important development seems to be that Geary is now investigating the possibility of placing the order with Lockheed in such a way that they would not begin to incur costs until October 1964. Kelly has apparently told him that on this basis he could live on an expenditure basis with about [REDACTED] for the balance of FY 1965. This would mean that [REDACTED] would have half of the pie and still be able to put most of his dollar costs in FY 1966. I told Geary that we have an item of [REDACTED] in our FY 1965 NRO budget which would be 50% of the airframe costs on 25 airplanes but he did not seem to react in a manner that would indicate that he felt this request would survive the sharp pencil of the DNRO or that he really needed to have a co-sponsor. Geary's equation is fifteen aircraft for SAC and ten for us.

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2. While I am delighted to see the U-2L proposal apparently advancing and even though I am an admirer of Col. Geary's forensic ability, I am somewhat disturbed by the essentially unilateral nature of his negotiations within the Pentagon and, thus far, with Kelly Johnson. If the [REDACTED] hopes to obtain, presumably by diverting KEDLOCK funds to this purpose, is expensed without any contributions from CIA we would more than ever be beholden to USAF/NRO/JRC for the allocation of aircraft for the clandestine mission. One of the reasons we have been able to hold out against their incursions to date was that we were originally financial partners in the true sense with USAF in the creation of the U-2. I can only assume that if enough votes are garnered by Geary he will seek to get this effort underway under the Program D label in the NRO. I do not question Geary's basic motives whatever in apportioning aircraft as he says he would do, but when you add fifteen aircraft to the twenty now operated by SAC you have quite a fleet as compared to our present store of five, plus one in the works plus ten. The locus of technical monitoring

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under a Geary-run program would undoubtedly be Wright-Patterson AFB. I am not very certain that Geary would turn to us for contracting services though I think he might wish to do so simply because this is a familiar mechanism to him and to Kelly Johnson. Flight testing would probably take place at North Base, Edwards. I think we should take the initiative here and press Mr. McCone for a commitment in favor of this proposal so that we might be sure of his backing in any discussions we might have with Col. Geary about the allocation of responsibility, who gets which aircraft first, and the ultimate allocation of same. I think we should resist any effort by NRO to remove the [redacted] we are inserting in our FY 1965 budget for this purpose, certainly until we have had a chance to discover which way Mr. McCone wishes to go. You will recall that we gave you a briefing just prior to your departure in March on our estimated reconnaissance aircraft requirements for the next five years. This, I think, still remains the basis of our thinking, and a briefing which you might wish us to give to the DCI.

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JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.
Deputy Assistant Director
(Special Activities)

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